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**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 914TH AIRLIFT WING
2720 KIRKBRIDGE DRIVE
NIAGARA FALLS ARS, NEW YORK 14304-5000**



JOHN A. CARUSO
LTC USAF RETIRED
DIRECTOR/NEWSLETTER

MILITARY RETIREE NEWSLETTER
"STILL SERVING"

August-Oct 2011

ARTHUR A. CLINE
MAJ USAF RETIRED
ASST. DIRECTOR

FROM THE DIRECTOR



WHEN THE MUSIC STOPPED

At military theaters, the National Anthem is played before the film program begins. At Iraq's Ballad Airport, US service members watch movies in a large auditorium. Chaplain Jim Higgins was at one such event. Midway through the anthem, the music stopped. Silence reigned supreme. No one moved. The music re-started, but again it stopped at the same point. You could hear a pin drop. Suddenly, a lone voice was heard, then a dozen. Quickly the room was filled with a thousand voices..."And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say does the Star Spangled Banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Chaplain Higgins said it was the most inspiring moment he had in Iraq. "The Nation should know the caliber of our young men and women serving on foreign shores."
Bolling AFB, MD

PART I. ITEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

1. Thunder of Niagara Air Show

The "Thunder of Niagara" air show Open House is presented by the 914th Airlift Wing, 107th Airlift Wing and the Niagara Military Affairs Council.

The 9/11 TEN YEAR REMEMBRANCE Air Show will be held at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station on Sept. 10-11, 2011 to honor our heroes. This is the 10 year memorial honoring 1st responders and our US Military. The USAF Thunderbirds military jet team will be the main attraction. Supporting cast includes: US Navy F-18 Super Hornet, US Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey, Randy Bell Fighter Jets MIG-17F, DAV B-25, Wounded Warrior P-51, PT-17 Stearman, L-39, Sukhoi SU-26M, Warbirds, static displays, and many more events.

The show is totally free to attend and gates open at 0900 both days. There will be vendors selling drinks, food, Thunderbird and Air Force souvenirs.

For more information about the air show, please check. www.911tenyearremembrance.org

2. Health Fair

The Amherst Family Health Fair is co-sponsored by Kaleida Health and Assemblyman Jim Hayes. It will be held this year on Saturday, August 6, 2011 from 9 am to Noon at the Amherst Senior Center at 370 John James Audubon Parkway, Amherst, NY. The Health Fair is FREE for everyone. Bring the whole family. Some of the health services include: Cholesterol screening, blood pressure checks, prostate cancer testing (PSA) glucose and Juvenile Diabetes tests, hearing checks-ups, Dental Hygiene, and Chiropractic spinal exams, to name a few. This has always been a great success with the Seniors and Veterans in this area. I would like to see a greater turnout of the retirees. Give yourself a break by helping to achieve better health through prevention, early intervention and lifestyle changes.

Directions:, 370 Amherst Senior Center, 370 Audubon Parkway, Amherst. From Main St, via local roads, west on North Forest for three miles, turn right on Audubon Parkway. In one half mile turn right into the Senior Center. Or via I-290 (Youngman Highway), exit at the I-990, go two miles to Audubon Parkway (Exit 3). Turn right onto John James Audubon Parkway. Senior Center is one half mile from the traffic signal. Turn left into the Senior Center.

3. Fort Drum Commissary Case Lot Sale

The case lot sale will be held on August 13, 2011 from 0900-1800 hrs and August 14 0900-1600 hrs at NFARS. The location of the sale is Hangar/Bldg 850. After entering the gate, continue straight ahead to the stop sign. Then turn right and the Hangar will be on your left. All sorts of grocery items, including meats, will be for sale. You must present a retired military ID at point of purchase. If you did not send in pre-order forms, you can do so at the Hangar.

4. Falcon Club Clam Bake

August 6th and 13th, 2011. It will be held in Bldg. 314. It starts at 1730 hours. Food will be served at 1800 hours. \$5.00 per person. Drink Specials, Food, Music and Fun. Come and treat yourself.

5. Niagara County "Thank a Vet" Discount Program

This program is a way for Niagara County to recognize the service and sacrifices made by our returning veterans. Under the "Thank a Vet" Discount Program, eligible veterans will receive a photo ID card, identifying them as an honorably discharged veteran. Participating county merchants will agree to honor the card by providing holders with a discount on purchases or services. More info: <http://www.niagaracounty.com/ThankAVet.asp>

6. Return the F.A.V.O.R

"Return the F.A.V.O.R." stands for "Finding and Assisting Veterans of Record" and is a local discount program for Erie County Veterans. The program is available for any veteran in Erie who files the military discharge forms/DD-214 with the County Clerk's office.

Filing your discharge or separation papers is free of charge and certified copies of recorded discharges are made free of charge for veterans or their immediate families whenever needed. Discharge papers are proof of your military service, and can be used to establish eligibility for a variety of benefits including property tax exemptions and civil service credits.

Once you file your discharge papers, we will provide a personal discount card, free of charge that can be used in local businesses.

Participating Merchants:

If your business would like to participate, fill out the **merchant application** and return it to our office. For more information, call us at 716-858-8865 or visit our website at:

<http://www.2.erie.gov/clerk/index.php?q=return-favor>.

PART II. ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

1. Military Living- Twitter

Follow *Military Living* on Twitter. It now has a new web site: www.twitter.com/militaryliving. Don't miss any updates and breaking news from *Military Living*.

You can follow your interests to instantly connect to what's most meaningful to you. *Military Living* keeps in contact with people and connects to what they are now tweeting. Try it!

2.SSN Removal From ID Cards

DoD is eliminating the Social Security Numbers (SSN) from DoD ID Cards. The following key messages and themes will be part of all communications efforts related to SSN Reduction.

1. The SSN will no longer be visible on the cards and should not be relied on for individual authentication.
2. These changes are being made by the Department to protect the identity information of cardholders; and
3. The removal of SSNs will occur in three phase, all of which will be implemented as part of the normal card lifecycle process:
 - Phase One, already in progress, will remove the printed dependent SSN from Dependent Identification and Privilege cards (DD Forms 1173 and 1173-1) and replace it with "xxx-xx-xxxx." At this point, the sponsor's SSN will remain visible on the card.
 - Phase Two will remove printed SSNs from all DoD ID cards. The SSN will be replaced by a "DoD Identification Number" which will appear on all DoD ID cards. Additionally, a "DoD Benefits Number" will be printed only on those ID cards that convey benefits. This phase will begin by the end of May 2011.
 - Phase Three will remove SSNs from barcodes on all cards and is scheduled to begin during calendar year 2012.

Individuals will receive a new card upon expiration of the current card. By the end of May 2011, ID cards issuance facilities will begin issuing DoD ID cards without SSN appearing on the card. * Current ID cards should not be replaced until the card is within 30 days of its expiration date. ID card holders whose ID card has an INDEF expiration date and wishes their SSN to be removed may do so at any time.*

NOTE:TRICARE beneficiaries should make sure they have their Social Security number (SSN) committed to memory. It won't be found on new Dept of Defense (DoD) ID cards.

3 .AAFES-Phone and Gift Cards

Show your patriotism with Phone and Gift Cards for the troops. Exchange Calling Cards help troops stay in touch, while Exchange Gift Cards help the troops purchase needed assessories. It's easy to help our defenders of Freedom: the Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines with globel calling cards and gift cards. You can purchase cards at the Exchange online site at www.shopexchange.com.

Anyone can send gift or calling cards by logging on to <https://shop.aafes.com/gcs/default.aspx>.

4. You Know Your ABCs, BUT How About 112- Some know about red lights on cars, but not 112.

About 1:00 pm, Lauren was driving to visit a friend. An UNMARKED police car pulled up behind her with his lights on. Lauren's parents told her never to pull over for an unmarked car, but rather wait to get to a gas station or a safe place.

Lauren had listened to their advice and called 112 on her cell phone and told the police dispatcher that she was frightened. The dispatcher advised her to keep driving, remain calm and that he had police on the way.

In ten minutes four police cars surrounded the unmarked car. A policeman went to her side. Officers pulled the suspect from the car and tackled him to the ground. The man was a convicted rapist, wanted for other crimes. You

might not know about the **112** phone feature but a Bell telephone representative confirmed that **112** is a direct link to State Troopers in all states. It might be appropriate to load this number into your cell phone.

Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph

5. American Red Cross

When the tragic events of September 11, 2001 unfolded, blood donors were there to show their support and assure there was a ready blood supply to assist those in need.

As the 10th Anniversary of 9/11 approaches, many Americans are looking for a way to show they have not forgotten. The American Red Cross is hosting 90 Days of Remembrance, a 12 week long initiative that invites all current and first time donors to visit an American Red Cross blood donation center and donate blood.

Running from June 11 through September 11, 2011, our goal is 911 blood donations at each blood donation center by 9/11/11.

Each presenting donor will receive a limited edition 10th Anniversary commemoration pin celebrating their

blood donation and will be invited to attend the American Red Cross Greater Buffalo Chapter memorial activities (Details included)

PART III. PERSONAL AFFAIRS

1. VA National Cemetery

Are you eligible for burial in a VA National Cemetery?

All active duty military and veterans who meet service requirements and are honorably discharged (if applicable) are eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery.

Today, more than 24 million veterans, Reservists and National Guard members with 20 years qualifying service (who are entitled to retired pay or would be entitled, if at least 60 years of age), have earned the honor of burial in a national cemetery.

Spouses, minor children and the parents of unmarried active-duty troops killed in action may also be eligible for burial. Persons NOT eligible for burial include former spouses, other family members, those with a dishonorable discharge, and persons found guilty of capital crimes.

The gravesite, headstone or marker and US flag are provided at no cost to the deceased's family. (Casket burials cost \$951 and burying cremated remains, \$672.)

To verify eligibility, fax a copy of your military discharge documents to 1-866-900-6417. Then call 1-800-535-1117 to begin the process.

2. VA Medical Center

Any veteran who is service-connected for a disability for which he or she uses prosthetic or orthopedic appliances may receive an annual clothing allowance. This allowance also is available to any veteran whose service-connected skin condition requires prescribed medication that irreparably damages outer garments. To apply, contact the prosthetic representative at the VA Medical Center.

3. VA Caregiver Benefits

The VA has many services. Available for caregivers of our nation's veterans. Some benefits are available to caregivers of veterans of all eras. These include:

- Access to the VA's toll-free Caregiver Support Line (855) 260-3274
- Expanded education and training on caring for veterans at home
- Support services such as counseling, support groups, and referral service
- An enhanced website for caregivers: www.caregiver.va.gov.

Some benefits will require new regulations be written. These benefits, which will be available only to caregivers of seriously ill and injured veterans who served after Sept. 11, 2001, include:

- A monthly stipend
- Health care coverage
- Travel expenses, including lodging and per diem, while accompanying veterans undergoing care
- Respite care
- Mental health service and counseling.

Each VA medical center has designated caregiver support coordinators who will assist in helping caregivers understand and apply for the new benefits. If you are a caregiver of a veteran, you owe it to yourself to investigate what's out there for you. MOAA

4. TRICARE Update

Colorectal Cancer is the third most common cancer among men and women in the U.S. Of cancers affecting both men and women, it is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S., according to the CDC.

The beginning stages of colorectal cancer often have no symptoms, and early screening can save lives. Screening can find abnormal growths, called polyps that can be removed before they are dangerous.

For TRICARE Prime and Standard beneficiaries, there are no cost shares or co-payments for colorectal cancer screenings, as well as many other important preventive care services. For Medicare-eligible beneficiaries covered by TRICARE For Life, Medicare covers colorectal cancer screening tests, and TRICARE generally pays the remainder of any costs not paid by Medicare.

To learn more about colorectal cancer screening, visit the CDC's Screen for Life campaign at www.cdc.gov/screenforlife. For more information about TRICARE's coverage of colorectal cancer screenings, visit www.tricare.mil.

PART IV. SPACE-A TRAVEL

1. MacDill AFB-Tarpon Springs FL

I had called reservations at MacDill thirty days in advance of the day I would arrive, 18 April, and had no problem reserving three days. Room rates: VOQ Rooms/Suites \$39, Chief's Suites \$42.50, TLF \$41.50, Distinguished VOQ \$48.25, General's Suite \$53.25 and Pet TLFs \$51.50. Reservation phone number: 813-831-4775/4804.

The Service Station for gas was \$3.72, on average 7 cents cheaper than off base. The BX/Commissary is in one long building with a Class VI store. The Retiree Activities Office (USAF) and the Retiree Services Office (USA) are also in the same building.

I stopped in the RAO to visit a long time friend, LTC Glenn Eggleston, the Director. We have known each other for twenty years. To my dismay, I was told that he had passed away in February 2011, just a couple of months ago. Gayle and I send our condolences to his wife, Pearl. We will continue to send her our Newsletter.

Then on to Tarpon Springs. Anytime we are at MacDill, Tarpon Springs is on our schedule to visit. This was the first time we had seen the shrimp and sponge boats dockside. Usually they are in the Gulf.

We thought we would try a different Greek restaurant this time. It's on the Main St (Dodecanese Blvd) and was doing a thriving business, winning a few awards as the best local restaurant. The food was excellent and just a bit pricey, but well worth it.

Gayle and I decided to cut our stay at MacDill to two days and headed south to Naples, FL. Our daughter Jill, her husband Rich and their daughters, Carli and Lexi had rented a condo there. We were fortunate to spend five days with them with beautiful sunny, warm weather. It's always fun to have "Gramma" and "Papa" around!!, so we're told.

2. New London Sub Base, CT

Well, it's Thursday 28 April and Gayle and I are off again. This time to the New London Submarine Base in

Connecticut. I'm going to their Audiology Dept to have my hearing aids checked (RCHAP). They are four years old now and I purchased them from the Audiology Dept.

With all the bad weather news on TV about severe thunderstorms and tornados, we were hesitant about going (for a few minutes!).

When we left home, it was windy and sunny. It wasn't until we crossed into Massachusetts when the rain came down. At times, a real deluge, but it rained all the way to New London. I had to go to the Visitor's Center for a pass to enter the base. The Air Force no longer issues ID vehicle decals. My ID card did not get me in.

Luck was with me. I explained to the seaman that the AF doesn't issue decals anymore for automobiles. That makes it inconvenient for us when we visit other services bases. Visitor Center beckons.

He then tells me he can issue me a decal for my car and I can enter any base of all services. All of a sudden, the rain outside appeared. It was pouring outside and he had me follow him to my car while he dried off the windshield so the decal would stick as I held the large umbrella over him. It worked. This fellow is a very good representative of the Navy when it comes to getting along with other services. He could have just given me a pass. He proved what an asset he is to the Navy.

The seaman also stated other retirees with the auto registration, proof of insurance and driver's license can get the decal.

Gayle and I then went to the Commissary and Package Store for some shopping before we checked into the Navy Lodge. The NEW/Commissary are quite large and the Service Station gas price was \$4.08 on base and \$4.15 to \$4.17 outside.

We stayed at the Navy Lodge and our room was excellent at the rate of \$74.50. You can stay up to seven days.

There is a "Breakfast to go" bag in the lobby each morning with a complimentary copy of USA Today newspaper. The bag consists of orange juice, a muffin, and yogurt. There is always fresh brewed coffee in the lobby for your enjoyment.

Friday morning we went to the Audiology Dept and saw Susan again. She gave a thorough check up of my hearing aids. I was told hearing aids have been upgraded and if I wished, I could get them at the base again; a better hearing aid and at less cost than my first pair.

My audiology exam, which I had done at home, will be mailed to her with all paperwork done now, she'll be able to get me new ones. Then, one more trip to see her and have the hearing aids fine tuned by computerization.

Now, on to Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts where I had reservations for two nights at \$39 each night. Upon arrival, (1 hr 45 min), I checked in and then we visited the BX/Commissary, which was very big.

Room rates: Visiting Quarters \$39 per night, DV Quarters \$48.25 per night, Temporary Lodging Facility \$41.50n per night, per room and Pet Friendly Rooms (TLF) \$51.50 per night, per room.

Gayle and I had dinner at our favorite restaurant, "Luigi's" when we come to Hanscom. It's located in Bedford, MA (5 miles from the base). Prices are more than reasonable and the food is very plentiful and very good.

Saturday morning was Retiree Activity Day. The RAD began at 0900 at the Base Theatre. Information services at three locations started in the Club at 1000. Opening ceremonies started at 11:45 am, the luncheon began at noon. Col. Stacy L. Yike, 66th Air Base Group Commander served as the guest speaker.

The information services portion of the day featured approximately 30 on and off base exhibitors. Exhibitors included TRICARE, Social Security, The Veterans Administration, and the 66th Medical Squadron. Their new location in the Brown Building is behind the Pass and ID waiting area.

As usual after the RAD, we did some shopping at the BX/Commissary. There was a Case Lot sale going on.

Gayle and I went to Margaritas Restaurant, just outside the base, for dinner. The food was good and reasonable with a Mexican atmosphere.

Sunday, we headed home. We accomplished a lot on this trip and met new and old friends at the Hanscom RAD.

Well, Gayle and I are on the road again on Thursday June 16, 2011. We are on our way back to New London Submarine Base, CT. My hearing aids will be ready at the Audiology Dept. tomorrow morning at 0845. We are staying once again at the Navy Lodge, rate \$74.50. Dinner was at an authentic Mexican restaurant, "Ortegaz", family owned. It is just about 4 miles from the base. Food was excellent, reasonable and different from the chain restaurants.

Friday morning we went to the Audiology Dept (in the clinic) and once again, Susan provided her expertise in fitting and computer adjusting my new hearing aids. I'll have to return after three weeks of using them to resolve any problems, if any. Also, she'll fine tune them to my hearing capacity and

what makes me comfortable.

We were on our way home by 9:30 am and arrived after 6 ½ hours.

On July 7, I had to make a return visit to New London for Susan to fine tune my new hearing aids. Gayle and I had reservations at the Navy Lodge for the night. Upon arrival, we went to the Security office to get a base sticker for Gayle's car. No problem. All we needed was her driver's license, car registration and insurance certificate.

We had dinner at the Olive Garden about three miles from the base on Rt. 95 near one of the Malls. Easy to get to and not a bad drive.

Friday morning we went to see Susan at the Audiology Dept. Then on to Rt. 95 for our 7 hour trip home. We drove through two separate downpours with hail and we were glad when the weather cleared. Otherwise the trip home was uneventful.

John and Gayle

3. 66th Force Support Squadron (Services)

Recreational facilities and services on Hanscom AFB, MA. HANSCOM INN- 781-377-2112- Reservations are being accepted for Space-A and leisure travelers at the Hanscom Inn up to 10 days at a time based on availability. Rates for VQ (Visitor's Quarters) are \$39, the TLF (family quarters) for \$41.50 per night and DV suite for \$48.25. Make your reservations for a reasonable price by calling 781-377-2112, ext 0 Summer 2011

PART V. RESPECT FOR THE FLAG

Fly Your Flag Proudly



During the rendition of the national anthem, when the flag is at attention, facing the flag, with the right hand over the heart.

displayed, all present shall stand

When the flag is not displayed, those present should face toward they would if the flag was displayed there.

the music and act in the manner

DISCLAIMER: The Retiree Activities Letter is published by the Retiree Activities Office to inform retirees and family members of matters affecting their military rights, benefits, and obligations. While every effort is made to verify information in this newsletter, neither the editor nor the RAO staff can guarantee the accuracy of information received from outside sources. The editor reserves the right to reduce the length of the material to fit the space available.

**JOHN A. CARUSO Lt Col USAF Ret
EDITOR**

**GAYLE W. CARUSO
CO-EDITOR**

NOTE: Consider keeping your copies of our newsletters. They can prove to be important references in the future.

Gem of the Day

An Afterthought: A couple from Minnesota decided to go to Florida for a few days to thaw out from the cold winter. Unable to coordinate their working schedules, the husband decided to go a day earlier with his wife, to follow the next day. When he arrived, he sent his wife an email announcing his safe arrival but unfortunately, left one letter out of her email address. Meanwhile, in another part of the country, a widow had just returned home from the funeral of her husband, a

Lutheran pastor of many years. She decided to check her email expecting to hear from relatives and friends. Upon opening the first one, she let out a loud scream and fell to the floor. Her son rushed in to see the following message on the screen.

"To my loving wife, I've checked in. Everything has been prepared for your arrival here tomorrow. I look forward to seeing you then" Your devoted husband. P.S. Sure is hot here.

Arline F. Love

President John Quincy Adams, born July 11, 1767

"Old minds are like old horses...You must exercise them if you want to keep them in working order".

**BENEFIT AND BASKET RAFFLE
FOR
TSGT JACOB "JAKE" TEUFEL**

**Saturday, August 13, 2011 @ 5:30 P.M.
Knights of Columbus, 55 Main Street, Tonawanda, NY
Cost: \$25**



**FOOD & BEVERAGE, BASKET RAFFLE AND FUN FOR ALL!
Jake has been diagnosed with melanoma.
The money we raise will be used to help offset his medical bills.**

**Tickets can be purchased from any
Orderly Room, the Civilian Personnel Office,
the Base Fitness Center or Chief Trosterud, Bill Hendee,
Dennis Paradowski, Chief Barone or Chief Ballester (107th).**

**Anyone wishing to donate a basket can call
Jeannie Morrison @ 236-2500 or Beth Greaser @ 236-2167.**



90 Days of Remembrance June 11 – September 11, 2011

Come in to an American Red Cross Blood Donation Center
and donate blood or platelets.

Every presenting donor will receive a 10th Anniversary
commemorative pin celebrating their blood donation.

Help us achieve our goal of **911 donations**
at each donation center by 9/11/11.

It's an easy way to show that you haven't forgotten while helping to
ensure there is an adequate blood supply for patients in need.

*Visit redcrossblood.org/nyp/911 to find out how we're doing towards
reaching our goal of 911 donations at each blood donation center by 9/11/11*

Donors also will be invited to write a personal message to a family affected by 9/11. Each Red Cross blood donor also will be invited to
attend the 10th Anniversary ceremony to be held on September 9th at the American Red Cross Greater Buffalo Chapter.

The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™

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**914th AIRLIFT WING/CVR
2720 KIRKBRIDGE DRIVE
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14304-5001**

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

FIRST CLASS



Airman& Family Readiness	236-2097
Base Exchange	236-2100
Base Billeting	236-2014
Base Gym	236-2101
Chapel	236-2395
Credit Union	236-2348
Customer Service ID	236-2197
Falcon Club	236-2027
Ft. Drum SB	800-772-6900
Ft. Drum Pharmacy	800-354-9280
Pittsburgh Cas. Asst.2 Off	800-235-7780
Family Support Center	236-2097
DEERS	800-538-9552
TRICARE	877-874-2273
TRICARE For LIFE	866-773-0404
Express Scripts Pharmacy	866-363-8667
IT&T Services	236-3367

Fitness Center	236-2101
Legal Aid	236-2133
Pass & ID Security	236-2281
RAO	236-2389
RAO Fax	236-3173
Recreation Center	236-2450
Space-A Travel	236-2389
VA Hospital	800-532-8387
VA Hospital	834-9200
VA Affairs	800-827-1000
VA Affairs	888-VETS-NYS
Cleveland DFAS	800-321-1080
DFAS/Annuitant	800-321-1080
Medicare	800-442-8430
Social Security	800-772-1213
Delta Dental	888-838-8737
Email-John.Caruso@niagarafalls.af.mil	



